

Editor's Note

PETER E. KELLER

Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive & Brain Sciences

THE scope of topics that fall within the purview of empirical musicology is ever broadening. New methods and creative analytical approaches—oftentimes borrowed from distant fields—are necessary to satisfy the demands posed by this expansion. Volume 5, Number 4 of *Empirical Musicology Review* (EMR) comprises five contributions that illustrate the breadth of themes and plurality of approaches that currently characterizes the field.

In the first target article, Hussein Hirjee and Daniel G. Brown describe a fascinating method—inspired by protein homology detection techniques used in the field of bioinformatics—for characterizing rhyming style in rap music. Their probabilistic model replaces proteins with phonemes, and thereby provides a powerful technique for detecting regularities in the lyrics that color this musical genre.

In the second target article, Henkjan Honing advocates a cognitively motivated music information retrieval method based on the notion of a musical ‘hook’ – a salient and easy to recall moment in a musical phrase or song. W. Bas de Haas and Hans Wiering respond to this article in a detailed commentary that reinforces and elaborates upon Honing’s call for a move away from purely data-oriented approaches. Taken together, these contributions present cogent arguments in favor of developing music information retrieval systems that rely on models grounded in knowledge about how humans process music.

Roger Dean and Freya Bailes, in a third target article, employ time series analysis to explore the relationship between acoustical properties of music and the listener’s perception as a work dynamically unfolds in time. Their method is sophisticated but tractable, and, as it is based on raw acoustic signals, should prove to be highly valuable in the study of real-time listener responses to music from diverse stylistic and cultural traditions.

As has been the case with previous issues of EMR, Volume 5, Number 4 ends with announcements of upcoming calls for papers and conferences. In this case, however, these announcements are preceded by a conference report. EMR occasionally publishes such reports (e.g., McDermott, 2008) with the intention of providing information for readers who are in the process of deciding which events to attend, and where best to present the results of their own research, in the future. The current conference report, authored by Nina Jukić, Mats Küssner, and Li-Ching Wang, gives a synopsis of the Third International Conference of Students of Systematic Musicology (SysMus10), which took place at the University of Cambridge, UK, in September 2010.

REFERENCES

McDermott, J. (2008). Fourth Meeting of Neurosciences and Music, Montreal, 2008. *Empirical Musicology Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 173–174.